

Case 3330

Nectarinia senegalensis cruentata Rüppell, 1845 (Aves, Passeriformes): proposed conservation of the subspecific name

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the subspecific name *Nectarinia senegalensis cruentata* Rüppell, 1845 for the Ethiopian, SE-Sudanese and Eritrean population of the scarlet-chested sunbird, originally proposed as *Nectarinia cruentata*. The senior objective synonym *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840 has not been used since its first publication except in synonymy. It is proposed that the name *cruentata* Rüppell, 1845 be conserved by suppression of *proteus* Rüppell, 1840.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; NECTARINIIDAE; *Nectarinia*; *Nectarinia senegalensis cruentata*; *Cinnyris proteus*; sunbirds; Ethiopia; Southeast Sudan; Eritrea.

1. Rüppell described the same species of sunbird twice, in 1840 and in 1845. Rüppell (1840, p. 91 and a footnote on p. 91) proposed by indication a new specific name *Cinnyris proteus* for a sunbird illustrated by Le Vaillant (1808, pp. 165–167, pl. 295, fig. 2) under the name ‘Le Sucrier Protée’ (Le Vaillant’s names of birds were not latinized binomens; the name on the plate reads ‘Protté’). In his paper Rüppell (1840, p. 91) gave a reference to Le Vaillant’s name ‘Le Sucrier Protée’, which he latinized as *Cinnyris proteus*, thereby providing a valid scientific name (Indications – Articles 12.2.1 and 12.2.7). In addition, in the first footnote on p. 91 he described his own specimens of *Cinnyris proteus* on the assumption that they belonged to the same taxon as the bird described by Le Vaillant. However, the bird described by Le Vaillant had previously been named by Linnaeus (1766, p. 186) as *Certhia senegalensis* and is now considered to be a different subspecies to the one described by Rüppell (1840, p. 91).

2. Later, Rüppell (1845, pp. 26–27, pl. 9) established the name *Nectarinia cruentata* based on the same material (this time with no reference to Le Vaillant’s specimens) indicating that his species is apparently different from *Nectarinia senegalensis* (Linnaeus, 1766) illustrated by Le Vaillant as ‘Le Sucrier Protée’.

3. Rüppell’s (1845) description of *Nectarinia cruentata* contains citations from his description of *Cinnyris proteus* published in 1840, positively suggesting that it is indeed the same taxon. Bonaparte (1850, p. 406) was the first to recognize this fact and synonymized *Cinnyris proteus* with *Nectarinia cruentata*, not, however, acknowledging priority.

4. *Nectarinia cruentata* Rüppell, 1845 is treated in modern taxonomy as a subspecies of *Nectarinia senegalensis* (Linnaeus, 1766), first published in this combination by Neumann (1906, pp. 252, 254).

5. To the author's knowledge nobody since its first publication has used the senior synonym *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840, which precedes the name *Nectarinia cruentata* Rüppell, 1845, except in synonymy. Therefore the conditions of Article 23.9.1.1 (Reversal of Precedence) of the Code are met (see Rüppell, 1845, p. 26; Murs & Prévost, 1847, p. 87; Ferret & Galinier, 1850, p. 248; Bonaparte, 1850, p. 406; Brehm, 1863, p. 211; Heuglin, 1864, p. 262; Blanford, 1868, p. 284; Heuglin, 1869, p. 228; Finsch, 1870, p. 229; Blanford, 1870, p. 352; Salvadori, 1873, p. 450; Shelley, 1878, p. 259; Gadow, 1884, p. 93; Salvadori, 1884, p. 125; Hartert, 1891, p. 30; Shelley, 1900, p. 100; Reichenow, 1904–1905, p. 462; Neumann, 1906, p. 252; Hilgert, 1908, p. 146; Salvadori, 1916, p. 11; Moltoni, 1937, p. 250; Moltoni, 1939, p. 36; Steinbacher, 1949, p. 116; Cave & Macdonald, 1955, p. 353; Smith, 1957, p. 328; Toschi, 1959, p. 399; Mackworth-Praed & Grant, 1960, p. 795; Rand, 1967, p. 234; Wolters, 1979, p. 278; Nikolaus, 1987, p. 250; Lewis & Pomeroy, 1989, p. 495; Howard & Moore, 1991, p. 425; Clements, 2000, p. 547; Fry et al., 2000, p. 194; Cheke & Mann, 2001, p. 236; Dickinson, 2003, p. 707).

5. However, the conditions of Article 23.9.1.2 of the Code are not met. *Zoological Record* from 1955 to 2004 does not list any publication which cited the particular subspecies of the scarlet-chested sunbird. Only general and local check-lists of the Ethiopian/North Kenyan avifauna and the monograph of Cheke & Mann (2001) offer such detail. The limited use of the name *cruentata* in the preceding 50 years does not allow its automatic conservation under the provisions of the Code.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

(1) to use its plenary power to suppress the name *proteus* Rüppell, 1840, as published in the binomen *Cinnyris proteus*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;

(2) to place the name *cruentata* Rüppell, 1845, as published in the binomen *Nectarinia cruentata*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology;

(3) to place the name *proteus* Rüppell, 1840, as published in the binomen *Cinnyris proteus* and as suppressed in (1) above, on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

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